

**Adopt-A-Highway**  
**Tennessee Department of Transportation**  
**Volunteer Group Orientation Packet**



Tennessee is the Volunteer State, what better way for citizens to show pride in their community than to donate a few hours of your time to help preserve and protect the natural beauty of our great state!

# ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY PROCEDURES FOR VOLUNTEER GROUP COORDINATOR

Welcome to the Adopt-A-Highway program! By helping to fight litter you are showing that you take pride in your community. You also have the opportunity to promoting your organization's name, free of charge, on the Adopt-a-Highway signs along your route. Once you have been assigned 2 miles of roadway, please use the following checklist to help you organize and complete your cleanup events.

## **Prior to Cleanup Event:**

- ☐ Schedule a date *before the first pickup event* to hold a safety briefing for your volunteer group. Please cover the *Bag It, Move it, or Leave It* and the *Meth Lab Awareness* information included in this packet.
- ☐ All forms must be turned in to your district coordinator before your first litter cleanup event. Every time a new volunteer is interested in attending a cleanup, they are required to go through these steps before participating. Both the safety video and required forms can be found at <http://www.tn.gov/tdot/article/adopt-a-highway>.
  - ☐ Volunteer group coordinator must review and sign the Partnership Agreement Form.
    - ☐ Submit signed Partnership Agreement Form to District Coordinator.
  - ☐ Each volunteer involved in litter cleanup must:
    - ☐ Watch the safety video.
    - ☐ Review and sign Volunteer Liability Form.
  - ☐ All participate must be at least 12 years of age. Parents of children 12-17 years old must:
    - ☐ Watch the safety video with their child/children.
    - ☐ Read the volunteer safety guidelines with their child/children.
    - ☐ Sign the parental consent portion of the release statement. Tennessee law requires that parents assume the responsibility for their minor children.
- ☐ Contact your TDOT Adopt-A-Highway District Coordinator to schedule a time during regular business hours to obtain materials. Contact information for your District Coordinator can be found at <http://www.tn.gov/tdot/article/adopt-a-highway>.
  - ☐ TDOT will Provide Volunteer Group Coordinators with:
    - ☐ Safety Vests      ☐ Trash Bags
    - ☐ Safety Video      ☐ Caution Signs

### **Day of Cleanup Event:**

- ☐ Enforce safety rules. Each volunteer must wear a safety vests at all times during the cleanup.
- ☐ The caution signs provided by TDOT must be placed, facing oncoming traffic, at the beginning and the end of your stretch of adopted roadway for the duration of cleanup events. These signs are required by state and federal regulations to protect volunteers.
- ☐ Record number of trash bags filled.
- ☐ Take a group photo before and after cleanup. *As a safety precaution, please do not use cameras or smartphones while working along the roadway.*
- ☐ Call your District Coordinator to let them know how many bags were collected so TDOT Maintenance can pick them up.

### **After Each Cleanup Event:**

- ☐ Return your materials (safety vests, safety video, any leftover litter bags, caution signs, etc.) to your District Coordinator within three (3) days following your cleanup event.
- ☐ You may either call your TDOT Adopt-A-Highway District Coordinator or electronically submit your report online by visiting <http://www.tn.gov/tdot/article/adopt-a-highway> and click on Online Volunteer Activity Report Form.
- ☐ After your group completes its first pickup, recognition signage will be installed. Sign instillation normally takes between 6-8 weeks.
- ☐ Please keep us posted if there are any changes to the District Coordinators contact information or if a new group coordinator is assigned as the contact for your group.

**Please contact your District Coordinator or the Statewide Coordinator, Laura Williams, at [laura.d.williams@tn.gov](mailto:laura.d.williams@tn.gov)/615-532-3455 with any questions. We will be happy to work with you to ensure your cleanup events are a success. Be safe and have fun!**

# ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY VOLUNTEER SAFETY GUIDE

While you are making a difference picking up litter, please make sure you are doing it safely. These guidelines were developed with your safety in mind. Safety precautions are to be followed at all times. Think safety-first! Please review these safety reminders with your group prior to litter cleanup event.

## SAFETY REMINDERS

- Hold safety "tailgate" meetings before each pickup.
- Carpool to minimize number of vehicles at the site, and park clear of the roadway.
- Put on safety vest prior to getting onto the roadside.
- Wear gloves, leather shoes or boots, hats, long sleeves and light colored clothing.
- Place warning signs at the beginning and end of the work area.
- Face oncoming traffic while working.
- Maintain a working group of six to ten people. Work in pairs.
- Avoid working during peak travel times.
- Do not work on holiday weekends.
- Stop work in inclement weather.
- Avoid overexertion.
- Do not remove hazardous substances.
- Watch for snakes and sharp objects.
- Do not pick up items on bridges, in tunnels or on overpasses.
- Stay clear of construction areas.
- Do not pick up items from the pavement or median.
- Participants 12 - 17 years old must be adequately supervised by one or more adults. Ratio: At least one (1) adult supervisor for every five (5) youths.
- Drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration.
- Wear sunscreen.
- Do not over-stuff litter bags or compact them. When a bag feels heavy (about 10 pounds average), secure it and get another bag. Place bags together, if possible, near the roadside or next to your Adopt-A-Highway signs.
- No horseplaying or waiving of arms that might distract drivers.
- For younger volunteers, do not pick up broken glass, knives or dangerous items - instead, call these items to the attention of an adult volunteer.
- Stay alert and well away from the road.
- Do not wear headsets while cleaning the roadside.

## **BAG IT, MOVE IT, OR LEAVE IT?**

### **BAG IT - These items may be placed in a bag:**

- Small items made of paper, cardboard, plastic, Styrofoam, wood, rubber, glass, or metal provided that the item does not have sharp edges.
- Small, empty containers provided they don't have sharp edges.

### **MOVE IT - These items should be placed alongside your stacked bags at the edge of the shoulder:**

- Items with dull, pointed edges that might tear a bag.
- Large items that would prevent a bag from being properly tied closed.
- Heavy items that could tear a bag, provided that the item can be moved without causing physical injury.
- Containers that are not empty if the contents won't spill when moved and you can identify the product as one that is not hazardous. If you suspect that an item contains urine, do not move it.

### **LEAVE IT - If in doubt, leave it alone!**

- Items should be left where found without taking further action if they are: sharp, large, or heavy items that would cause physical injury if moved.
- Any item in an unsafe location (within six feet of a traffic lane, or unstable ground, etc.)
- Any item that you cannot identify and suspect may be hazardous.
- Unclosed or leaking items containing hazardous substances. Items may have labels such as Explosive, Toxic, Harmful, Corrosive, or Poisonous Gas written on them.

# METH LAB AWARENESS INFORMATION

The roadside dumping of illegal meth lab waste is becoming a serious problem in Tennessee. It may look like carelessly dumped trash, but is extremely hazardous to your health and has a severe impact on the environment.

Don't let meth waste threaten you or your group's safety! If you sight any of the following items along the roadside, do not approach or attempt to remove these items. Instead, immediately contact the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation's Meth Watch Hotline at 1-877-TNN-METH:

- Empty or used alcohol products such as isopropyl rubbing alcohol, denatured alcohol, etc.
- Numerous empty pill bottles and packaging, especially empty blister packs of nasal decongestant or cold remedies.
- Containers of separated liquids of ANY color.
- Bottles that look like they contain urine or windshield wiper fluid.
- Unused matches without striker plates, or washed striker plates.
- Corroded propane tanks or tanks with blue discoloration. Watch out! This means the tank is EXPLOSIVE!
- Boxes of battery fluid or bottles of muriatic acid
- Kitty litter bags, especially if they look like they've been opened and taped closed.
- Trash bags that are taped shut or with tubes coming out of them.
- Containers with any type of tubing attached.
- Anything put together or bundled up with duct tape.
- Suspicious-looking tool boxes, coolers, or other convenient storage containers.

**These items could be portable meth labs that have been hidden or stored by the roadside. Many portable meth labs have been known to be booby trapped.**

**BE VERY CAREFUL!!!!**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION  
TO HELPING KEEP TENNESSEE  
CLEAN AND BEAUTIFUL!**

# VOLUNTEER PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

The Tennessee Department of Transportation (hereafter called "Department") is grateful to have

\_\_\_\_\_  
(hereafter called "Volunteer Group")

participate in volunteer litter pickup activities on State Route \_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ County, mile markers \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_

for a one (1) year contract period of \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/20\_\_ to \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/20\_\_.

**Partnership agreements must be renewed yearly.**

Your participation in the Adopt-A-Highway program will help other Tennesseans as well as the Department create a cleaner atmosphere in Tennessee.

In consideration of the mutual benefits to be derived, the parties agree to the following:

## DEPARTMENT

- Provide documents including Volunteer Release Statements, Volunteer Safety Guidelines and safety video, Volunteer Group Coordinator Guide, and Partnership Agreement.
- Provide adequate number of trash bags.
- Provide \_\_\_\_ Approved Safety Vests (Class II high visibility).
- Remove trash bags from adopted area on next regular business day, or as soon as possible upon request.
- Provide traffic control signs to be used by the Volunteer Group.

## VOLUNTEER GROUP

- Conduct at least four (4) litter pickups during the contract year. Plan for at least one cleanup during each of the Spring, Summer, Winter and Fall seasons.
- Be aware of the hazardous nature of the work which is to be performed. The Volunteer Group shall assume all responsibility for, and shall defend and hold the State of Tennessee, its officers and employees harmless from any actions at law or claims of any character brought for injuries or damages sustained by any person or property arising from any act or omission of the Department in performing or failing to perform pursuant to this agreement.
- The Volunteer Group's Adopt-A-Highway Coordinator shall hold a "Crew Plan" safety briefing with the participating volunteers **prior** to each pickup.
- The Volunteer Group's Adopt-A-Highway Coordinator shall take responsibility for ensuring each volunteer has read the Volunteer Safety Guidelines and signed the Volunteer Release Statement.
- The Volunteer Group's Adopt-A-Highway Coordinator must return all signed Volunteer Release Statements to the Department prior to litter pickup activities. Volunteer Release Statements must be signed by each participating volunteer (parent/guardian signature required for volunteers between 12 – 17 years of age) and returned to the Department prior to the pickup event.
- Require workers to wear ONLY Class II high-visibility safety vests and to work only after traffic control signs are in place.
- Obtain required supplies and materials from the Department during regular business hours.

*All participants will be at least 12 years of age and participants between 12 and 17 years of age will be adequately supervised by an adult. There should be at least one (1) adult supervisor for every five (5) youths.*

**Please provide this signed form to your District Coordinator before your first litter pickup.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Volunteer Group Coordinator Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(TDOT District Coordinator Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(PRINT NAME)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(PRINT NAME)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

TDOT State Coordinator Approval Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ / /2016

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# VOLUNTEER RELEASE OF LIABILITY STATEMENT

I do hereby release, hold harmless, and discharge the Tennessee Department of Transportation, the state of Tennessee, its officers, agents and employees from any and all liability for injury to my person, damage to my property, or death, whether or not such liability is based upon allegations of negligence while participating in Tennessee's Adopt-A-Highway program and/or other volunteer activities on or near state-owned right-of-way. I acknowledge the fact that working in the area of roads can be a hazardous activity, and that I accept the risks associated with this work.

I certify that I have reviewed and fully understand the Adopt-A-Highway Volunteer Safety Guide and have watched in completion the Adopt-A-Highway Safety Movie as a prerequisite to participating in the Adopt-A-Highway program.

Volunteer Name *(Please Print)*: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Group: \_\_\_\_\_

County of Adopted Road: \_\_\_\_\_

## PARENTAL OR LEGAL GUARDIAN CONSENT RELEASE

This portion is required if volunteer is between the ages of 12 and 17.

Volunteers must be at least 12 years of age to participate in the program.

I certify that I am the parent or legal guardian of the minor volunteer named above and hereby grant permission for him/her to participate as a volunteer in the Adopt-A-Highway program. I further agree to abide by the stipulations set forth in the above paragraphs.

Parent/Legal Guardian Name *(Please Print)*: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide this completed form to your group's Adopt-A-Highway District Coordinator.